

# *CITY OF LA CRESCENT*



NEW RESIDENT'S  
HANDBOOK

# Welcome to the City of La Crescent – Apple Capital of Minnesota

It is our pleasure to provide you with A CLOSER LOOK, an information source about your City. This guidebook was designed to assist new residents of the community in becoming familiar with the City of La Crescent. As you page through this guide, you will find information about the City of La Crescent's history, government, services, parks, ordinances and other pertinent information that will help you fully benefit from and participate in your community. Don't hesitate to call City Hall if we can answer a question for you or provide further information.

---

## HISTORY OF LA CRESCENT

Sitting on the banks of the Mississippi River, La Crescent, Minnesota is surrounded by beautiful bluffs with spectacular views of the river. It's no wonder then that humans have inhabited this area, abundant with wildlife, for thousands of years. The most recent inhabitants before the White settlers were the Dakota Indians, who were a branch of the Sioux, and the Winnebago.

Following the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, Nathan Boone, youngest son of Daniel Boone, was among the early surveyors of this area. The various Indian tribes who had lived here were moved out in the 1840's to accommodate White settlement.

La Crescent was founded in 1851 by Peter Cameron and was originally called, "Camerons". Peter and his wife, Emma, were two of the town's most colorful characters. Peter tried to dig a canal to change the flow of the Mississippi River so it would flow closer to La Crescent and bypass La Crosse, Wisconsin, across the river. He died 10 weeks before its scheduled completion in 1857, and the canal was never finished, although the canal can still be seen in aerial photographs of the city.

The second name of La Crescent was "Manton", named by William and Harvey Gillett, after they cleared the downtown area for settlement for Peter Cameron. In quick succession, the name of the town was changed again by the somewhat unscrupulous Kentucky Land Company, which was a land speculation company. They wanted a more romantic

sounding name for the town to attract settlers and came up with "La Crescent", after the bend or "crescent" shape of the Mississippi River around the town. La Crescent incorporated in 1857.

John S. Harris arrived in La Crescent in 1856 and soon gave the town its identity of "Apple Capitol of Minnesota", a title that the city copyrighted in 2002. Despite the belief by "99 out of 100" people that apples could not grow in Minnesota", Harris planted his first apple trees here in 1857 and experimented with them until he grew trees hardy enough to withstand the severe Minnesota winters. He planted thousands of apple trees and hundreds of varieties, a full half of which he said were complete and total failures. Harris became known as "Father of the Orchardists" in Minnesota and was also a founding member of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society. Since 1947 La Crescent has celebrated this apple heritage annually with a weekend festival known as Applefest.

La Crescent has entertained a number of businesses throughout its history, but the one that has endured the longest is the apple industry. Around the 1940's La Crescent had about 40 small orchards in and around the city. Although the number of orchards has dwindled to less than a dozen, the acreage is about the same, as the orchards have been expanded in the bluffs farther away from the city. La Crescent grows gourmet apple varieties not found in most other places. Eighty per cent of its apples are sold in Minnesota, although they are also exported to surrounding states and Canada. Meanwhile, people continue to flock to the beauty of La Crescent.

## **AMBULANCE**

Call 911

## **ANIMAL CONTROL**

315 Main St.  
507-895-4414



All dogs and cats over the age of 4 months must be registered with the City. Licenses are available for purchase at La Crescent City Hall. A current certificate of rabies vaccination will need to be presented. Licenses run from January 1 to December 31 of each year with a \$10.00 penalty if delinquent on renewal after February. Licenses go on sale in November of each year.

When taking pets off their property for a walk, owners will need to have with them something to pick up any dog and cat excrement immediately and dispose of it in a trash receptacle located on the pet owner's property.

Pet owners with 3 or more of any single type of domestic animal over the age of 4 months need to obtain a special "multiple pet permit".

License fees per year are:

Spayed/neutered	\$ 7.50
Not spayed or neutered	\$10.00
Multi-Pet Permit	\$25.00 plus license tag for each animal
Replacement tag	\$ 1.00

## **APPLEFEST**

The annual Applefest celebration is held the third weekend of September each year. Events include: parade, carnival rides, flea market and craft fair as well as activities for all age groups at various



locations throughout the City. Detailed information can be found in a September issue of the *Houston County News*.

## **BICYCLES**



You may register your bicycle at La Crescent City Hall by bringing in a description, color and serial number of the bike. This is free of charge. Here are several reminders about the rules of the road for bicycling:

- Bicycle riders must ride *with* traffic.
- Ride in single file on the edge of the road, within the marked bike route if there is one.
- Obey motorist traffic laws, such as stopping at stop signs and signals, looking for traffic before changing lanes or crossing, signaling for a turn and not weaving through or across auto traffic.
- Secure your bike against theft.
- Wear a bike helmet.
- No person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk within a business district, nor shall a rider use the roadway when a useable path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to such roadway.

## **BURNING**

There is no open burning within the City. Outdoor fireplaces used for cooking, warmth or recreational purposes are allowed. No burning of paper or garbage – hard woods or charcoal only. Commercially manufactured wood burning appliances are allowed provided the appliance is equipped with a spark-arresting screen.



## **BUILDING AND ZONING**

315 Main St.  
895-4409

The Building and Zoning Department issues building permits, plumbing permits, sign permits and regulates the zoning ordinances of the City. The Department enforces the Uniform Building Code and related City ordinances. Please check with the building official before you begin your project to insure you are in compliance with City code.

## **CABLE ACCESS - GOVERNMENT**

Charter Communications Channel 4 and Ace Group Channel 201 are the City of La Crescent's government access channels. The access channels provide current information about City government and related activities.

## **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

507-895-2800  
507-895-2619 (FAX)  
109 SO WALNUT ST STE B

## **CHURCHES**

*Church of the Crucifixion*  
407 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.  
507-895-4720

*First Evangelical Lutheran Church*  
414 Main St.  
507-895-4775

*Immanuel Lutheran Church*  
4810 CTY 25  
507-895-6740

*La Crescent Evangelical Free Church*  
1675 CTY 6  
507-895-3733

*La Crescent United Methodist Church*  
520 N. Elm  
507-895-2373

*Messiah Lutheran Church*  
507-895-56

*Prince of Peace Lutheran Church*  
21 N. Hill  
507-895-4440

*South Ridge United Methodist Church*  
1781 Chicken Ridge Rd.  
507-895-2298

## **CITY HALL**

Monday-Friday  
8:00 - 5:00  
Motor Vehicle  
Department  
8:00 - 1  
2 - 5:00



315 Main Street, La Crescent, MN 55947  
Phone: City Hall (507) 895-2595  
Mtr veh (507) 895-4627  
Fax: 507-895-8694  
E-Mail:  
[cityoflacrescent@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov](mailto:cityoflacrescent@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov)

## **City Staff:**

Administrator: Bill Waller  
Attorney: Skip Wieser  
Bookkeeper: Connie Gile  
Building Inspector: Paul Kenaga  
Deputy Clerk:  
Finance Director: Debbie Shimshak  
Fire Chief: John Meyer  
Library Director: LaVonne Beach  
Motor Vehicle Clerk: Jane Paulson  
Office Manager: Deb Oliver  
Police Chief: Todd Nelson  
Police Secretary: Barb Gile  
Utility Supervisor: Michael Albrecht  
WWTP Operator: Mike Albrecht

### **CITY OFFICES:**

Building/Zoning	895-4409
Fire	895-2083 – office <b>911 - emergency</b>
Maintenance	895-2595
Motor Vehicle	895-4627
Police	895-4414 – office <b>911 - emergency</b>
Public Works	895-2595
Swimming Pool	895-8712

### **COMMUNITY BUILDING**

336 S. 1<sup>st</sup>

The Community Building accommodates 175 people and is used by non-profit, civic organizations. For further information about the use of this building contact City Hall at 895-2595.

### **COMMUNITY ICE ARENA**

507-895-4160

520 S. 14<sup>th</sup>

The La Crescent Community Ice Arena is home to ice hockey teams and tournaments. During the winter months, open skating is offered and times for this open skate can be obtained by calling City Hall 895-2595.

### **COMPOST AND RECYCLING CENTERS**



#### **CITY OF LA CRESCENT COMPOST SITE**

507-895-2595

Summer Hrs: Mon 2 -7

Saturdays 8 – 3 April-Sept

Fall Hrs: Mon 2-7, Thrs 2-7 & Sat 8-3

Winter Hrs: Saturdays only 8-3pm

This area is for depositing trees, leaves

and grass. **Location:** After lights, heading north on Highway 14/61, turn at first right and then left and then right ( the car wash will be to your left) -cross the railroad tracks (Classic Rock will be on your right) and follow the road to the compost site. Compost is free at site.

### **HOUSTON COUNTY RECYCLING CENTER**

507-725-5800

Open Thursdays 10:00 – 6:00 and

Saturdays 8:00 - 3:00

This area is for depositing large household items, textiles and tires free of charge. They also buy aluminum cans at competitive prices. Demolition material will be charged per pound.

**Location:** Located east of Highway 14/61, turn right and continue south until you pass the Commodore Club. At the southerly end of the Commodore Club, you turn left into parking lot, cross the railroad tracks into the county drop-off site.

### **CURFEW FOR MINORS**

Curfew hours for minors are as follows:

#### **Youths 15 through 17**

Sunday through Thursday – 11:00 pm

Friday and Saturday 12:30 am

Summer - June 1 through August 31, -  
12:30 am each night.

#### **Youths 12 through 14**

Sunday through Thursday – 10:00 pm

Friday and Saturday 11:00 pm

Summer - June 1 through August 31, -  
11:00 pm each night.

#### **Youths 11 and under**

Weekdays and weekends – 10:00 pm

## **DOOR TO DOOR SALES**

While the City requires registration of all parties conducting door-to-door sales, you as residents still have a right to your privacy. Any resident who wishes to exclude peddlers or solicitors from his/her premises may place a printed placard near the usual entrance bearing the following notice:

### **PEDDLERS AND SOLICITORS PROHIBITED**

This sign must measure at least 3  $\frac{3}{4}$  by 3  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

If you post the notice clearly and a peddler/solicitor violates the City Code, you may call the police.

All registered solicitors are required to display the identification badge issued by the City. If approached by a peddler or solicitor who does not have this identification or who refuses to leave when requested, call the police department emergency number 911.



### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Ambulance – 911  
Cable (Charter) – 800-581-0081  
(Ace) - 1811  
Electric Utility (Xcel) - 800-422-0782  
Fire – 911  
Gas Utility (Aquila) - 800-889-9508  
Police - 911  
Refuse (Waste Management) - 784-1095

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

336 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Non-Emergency 895-2083  
Emergency 911

The La Crescent Fire Department is staffed by 21 paid on-call ems/firefighters under the direction of a part-time fire chief.

## **GOLF COURSE**

PINE CREEK GOLF COURSE  
3815 North Pine Creek Road  
507-895-2410



The City-owned golf course is a 9-hole scenic par 35. Rates are:

Weekdays - \$10.00  
Weekends and Holidays - \$11.00  
Riding Carts - \$7.50

## **GOPHER ONE CALL**

800-252-1166.

Residents planning to dig to install fences/shepard's hook or decks, do landscaping or gardening, or otherwise disturb or excavate the soil greater than 12" in depth, are required to call Gopher State One Call at least 48 hours prior to beginning work. This is necessary to prevent damage to underground wires, pipes, etc. and for personal





safety. Failure to call could result in civil court action.

### **GOVERNMENT**

MAYOR: MIKE POELLINGER,  
COUNCIL MEMBERS: GREG  
HUSMANN, DALE WILLIAMS, SCOTT  
YEITER AND BERNIE BUEHLER

La Crescent is a city of approximately 5,100 people. The Mayor and four council members make up La Crescent's elected City Council. The mayor serves a two-year term and the council members serve four-year staggered terms. Local elections take place in November of even-numbered years. Terms of office become effective in January following the election.

The Council meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 5:30 pm at City Hall. Meetings are open to the public.

Agendas for City Council and commission meetings are available at City Hall on Fridays prior to each meeting and on the city's Web site: [lacrescent.govoffice.com](http://lacrescent.govoffice.com)

Minutes of City Council meetings are available on the web the Tuesday following each Council meeting.

The City is also served by advisory groups and various ad hoc commissions that are charged with reviewing and advising council and staff on issues within the City. These commissions include: planning, golf, park and recreation, historic bluff country and La Crosse Area Planning. For specific information on these committees or to be considered for an appointment, contact City Hall.

### **HOSPITALS/CLINICS**

La Crescent is fortunate to have two major hospitals within 10 minutes driving distance:

Franciscan Skemp Mayo Health System  
700 West Ave. S., La Crosse, WI 54601  
608-785-0940

Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center  
1910 South Ave., La Crosse WI 54601  
608-782-7300

Both hospital facilities have clinics located in La Crescent:

Franciscan Skemp-Mayo Clinic  
524 N. Elm, La Crescent, MN 55947  
507-895-6600

Gundersen Lutheran Clinic  
331 South 3<sup>rd</sup>, La Crescent, MN 55947  
507-895-6610

### **HOUSE NUMBERS**

All properties are required to have their street address, visible from the public way, for each dwelling unit. These are to be no less than 4-inch numbers written in Arabic type. Emergency services need to be able to locate you to serve you.

### **HYDRANT FLUSHING**



As part of its on-going maintenance, the Public Works Department flushes fire hydrants each Tuesday from April to October. During this time, the normal flow of the water supply is increased and residents may experience some temporary discoloration of the drinking water. Be assured that the water is safe

to drink and by allowing your cold water to run a few minutes, the discoloration will disappear.



### LEAVES

It is against City ordinance to rake leaves into the street. Leaves may be taken to the compost site (see "Compost and Recycling Centers"). During the fall of the year the compost site is open an extra day, Thursday, from 2:00 until 7:00



### LIBRARY

321 Main Street  
507-895-4047

#### Hours

Sunday	Closed
Monday	10 am – 6 pm
Tuesday	10 am – 6 pm
Wednesday	10 am – 7 pm
Thursday	10 am – 7 pm
4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	8:30 - 7 pm
Friday	10 am – 6 pm
Saturday	10 am - 2 pm

#### ON-LINE ACCESS:

[www.selco.inf](http://www.selco.inf)

Access the SELCO on-line catalog and informational databases to request or renew books via the Internet. You will need your 13-digit library number to login and a password assigned by the library.

La Crescent Library's web site:

[www.lacrescent.lib.mn.us](http://www.lacrescent.lib.mn.us)

### MOTOR VEHICLE DEPARTMENT

315 Main Street

507-895-4627

Monday through Friday  
from 8:00-1 & 2- 5:00pm.



Services available are: vehicle registration, license plate renewal drive's license renewal, DNR licensing: - watercraft, snowmobile and all terrain.

Behind the wheel testing is conducted on the 4th Thursday of each month (except for November) at City Hall from 8:30 am to 11:15 am and 1:00 pm to 4:15 pm. To make an appointment for the behind the wheel driver's test; please call Winona Monday - Wednesday at (507) 453-2935. The **written test** to obtain your instructional permit or coming in from out of state can be taken at City Hall on the 4th Thursday of each month from 8:15 – 11:15 am and requires no appointment. Manuals to study for the test can be obtained only by getting online at [mndriveinfo.org](http://mndriveinfo.org)

New residents must change their license within 60 days after moving to Minnesota from another state (a written test must be taken) or 30 days after a change of address within the state.

### NEWSPAPER

The *Houston County News*, the official City newspaper that carries public notices, is published weekly and distributed by subscription. The *Houston County News* is part of the La Crosse Tribune – La Crosse WI





## **PARKS**

**Frank Kistler Memorial Park:** located on the corner of South 7<sup>th</sup> and Hill Street, the park is equipped with play equipment, summer swimming pool (fee required) and winter skating rink.

**Old Hickory Park:** located on north end of town between Jonathan & Red Apple streets. The park is equipped with play equipment, soccer and baseball fields, a basketball court and two shelter houses (to rent call city hall at 895-2595)

**Valley South Park:** located on Juniper Street, this park has play structures and is used in the winter for sliding.

**Veteran's Park** is located off North Chestnut Street behind the American Legion. The park consists of play equipment and 3 shelters, which are available to rent for \$25.00 per shelter.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

315 Main Street  
507-895-4414 (Office)  
Emergency – 911



The police department is fully staffed to provide 24-hour police protection.

## **POST OFFICE**

(Listed in the phone book under “United States”)

230 Main Street

507-895-2233

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

315 Main Street  
507-895-2595

The Public Works Department maintains the water and sewer utilities as well as the maintenance of the streets.

During normal business hours emergencies may be reported by calling 895-2595. During other times, emergencies can be reported by calling the Police Department 895-4414. The police will contact one of the City's public works employees to respond to the problem.

## **Water**

The City of La Crescent is served by a city-owned and operated water utility. The water supply comes from wells, with a total pumping capacity of about 2690 gallons per minute. The City has 2 reservoirs. The water is chlorinated and fluoridated daily. The water hardness is 19 grains.

## **Sewer Backups**

If your sanitary sewer backs up, call the maintenance department during normal business hours 8-5. After these hours call the Police Department 895-4414 and they will contact the utility worker on call.

The main sewer line will be investigated and the necessary action taken. If, however, the problem exists in the sanitary sewer service, which connects the structure to the main sewer line, it would be the property owner's responsibility to have the problem corrected.

Note: many homeowners' insurance policies exclude sewer backups so homeowners are encouraged to talk to

their agent about protection. The City is only liable if the backup was caused by the City's negligence.

### **RECREATION**

315 Main Street  
507-895-2595

The City offers an extensive summer recreation program including swimming lessons, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball and golfing. Bulletins are available at City Hall the second Monday of April and are distributed to the schools.

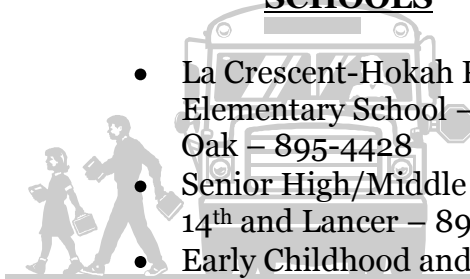
### **REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION**



Refuse is collected each Wednesday by Waste Management. You do not need to contact anyone to begin service. Simply purchase specially marked "City of La Crescent" bags and place them on the curb/alley for pickup. The City has an extensive recycling program, which cuts the costs associated with refuse. If a green recycling bin was not left at your new place of residence or you have a newly constructed home, you can pick up your free bin at City Hall. Information sheets explaining the recycling process are also available at City Hall.

### **SCHOOLS**

- La Crescent-Hokah Public Elementary School – S. 4<sup>th</sup> & Oak – 895-4428
- Senior High/Middle Level – S. 14<sup>th</sup> and Lancer – 895-5021
- Early Childhood and Family Education – 1120 S. Oak St. – 895-8731



- Community Education – 703 S. 11<sup>th</sup> – 895-5150
- La Crescent Montessori Academy – 28 S. Oak St. – 895-4054
- Crucifixion Catholic Elementary School – 420 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. – 895-4402

### **SENIOR DINING**

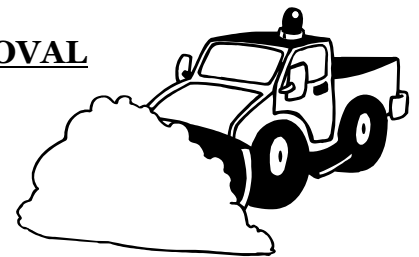
Community Center  
331 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
895-6585

La Crescent Senior Dining is served Monday – Friday at 11:15 a.m. Everyone 60 and over is welcome. Call one day in advance for reservations between the hours of 10:00 and 12:30 pm.

### **SNOW REMOVAL**

La Crescent **does** **not** have parking restrictions during the winter.

We do ask, however, that after a heavy snowfall you move your vehicle from the street to accommodate the snowplows.



### **SWIMMING POOL**

608 S. 7<sup>th</sup>  
507-895-8712

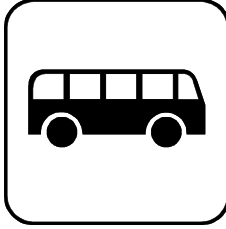


Open June through August. Provides swimming lessons as well as open

swim, family swim and adult swim time. Consult the recreation bulletin for a schedule or call the pool.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The La Crosse MTU provides public bus transportation. Bus schedules are available at City Hall or you can call the MTU office at 789-7350. Bus service connects with La Crosse, WI.



## **UTILITIES**

### **Cable** –

Charter Communications  
608-783-5255  
or  
Ace Telephone  
888-404-4940

### **Electricity** –

Excel Energy - 800-422-0782

### **Gas** –

MN Energy Resources – 800-889-9508

### **Telephone** –

Ace Telephone – 888-404-4940

### **Water** –

City of La Crescent – 507-895-2595

## **UTILITY BILLS**

Water meters are read and water and sewer is billed quarterly based on usage. For your convenience, a drop box is located on the right side of the wall by the front door of City Hall for payment any time of the week.



## **VOTING**

Pre-registration for those who are not currently registered voters in La Crescent closes 20 days

prior to any election, pursuant to law. You may register to vote up to 20 days before an election by filling out a registration card, available at City Hall, which you will then mail to the Houston County Courthouse.

Eligible voters may register and vote on Election Day if they have the proper identification. Only the following items can be accepted as sufficient identification for election-day registration:

- Valid Minnesota driver's license or receipt; or
- Minnesota identification card; or
- Student identification card showing valid address; or
- Ineffective registration card; or
- A witness, from your precinct, who will vouch for you; or
- Prior registration in the precinct

Registration is permanent, provided the voter votes at least once every four years and does not change residence or name.

Qualification for voting and voter registration:

- You must be at least 18 years of age by the date of the next election.
- You must be a citizen of the United States.
- You must be a resident of Minnesota for 20 days.

The following persons must also register to qualify for voting:

- Persons who have not voted or registered in La Crescent during the past four years;
- Persons who have changed their last name since registering;
- Persons who have changed their address since last registering.

La Crescent has three precincts. To determine your polling place, please call City Hall, 895-2595.

Congressional District – 1  
State Legislative District 31A and 31B

La Crescent is in the following districts:

**WEB SITE**

[www.cityoflacscent-mn.gov](http://www.cityoflacscent-mn.gov)



VIEW OF LA CRESCENT FROM APPLE BLOSSOM DRIVE

02/06/12